



NEWS RELEASE

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Woman Pleads in Pomona Fatal DUI Crash

A 21-year-old woman accused of driving drunk and crashing her car, resulting in the death of a passenger, pleaded no contest today, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Raelene Marie Martinez of Ontario pleaded no contest to gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated, DUI causing injury, driving with a .08 percent blood alcohol causing injury, and driving with a blood alcohol of .05 percent in case KA102330. The defendant also admitted to a special allegation of personally inflicting great bodily injury in the commission of the crime.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Douglas Sortino scheduled sentencing and restitution for Aug. 29 in Department G of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Pomona Branch.

Under the terms of the negotiated plea agreement, the defendant is expected to be sentenced to six years in state prison, said Deputy District Attorney Sandra Jimenez.

The prosecutor said on April 7, 2013, Martinez, who was 20 years old at the time, was drinking alcohol at a party in Pomona when an altercation occurred and the defendant decided to leave the gathering.

Martinez got into the driver seat, while four others were passengers in the car, the prosecutor said. During the drive, Martinez began to fight with the front passenger because she believed the person was involved in the fight at the party.

At that point, Martinez took her hands off the steering wheel and began hitting the front passenger, the prosecutor said. The car lost control, hit a curb and two other cars, and then flipped over.

The back passenger, Sarena Vargas, 19, was ejected from the car and died at the scene, the prosecutor said. The three other passengers suffered either fractures or bruising.

After the crash, Martinez was hospitalized for her injuries. She was later arrested and charged in connection with the crime.

The case was investigated by the Pomona Police Department.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 73,000 felony defendants and 113,000 misdemeanor defendants.